

LOCAL DINING OPTIONS

ITALIAN

DAVANTI ENOTECA - Lively newcomer serves rustic Italian share plates like mascarpone polenta, plus pasta, pizza and salumi. 1655 India St., Little Italy, \$\$

BICE - Milanese authenticity in the heart of downtown; don't miss the cheese bar. 425 Island Ave., Gaslamp \$\$\$

OSTERIA PANEVINO - Authentic Tuscan cuisine in classic sidewalk cafe style. 722 Fifth Ave., Gaslamp \$\$

DE MEDICI CUCINA - Brings to San Diego a rebirth of fine Italian cuisine. Pastas are made on the premises with all dishes expressly to order and made with only the finest ingredients. 815 Fifth Ave, Gaslamp \$\$\$

MONELLO - The vibe is sleek and casual-glam, with the menu focusing on Milanese street food. Choose from a selection of pizzas, flatbreads, house-made gelato, a daily breakfast menu, a daily aperitivo from 4-7 p.m. with complimentary nibbles from the chef, and its signature vermouth. 750 W. Fir St., Little Italy, \$\$

CUCINA URBANA - A hit since the day it opened, this chic neighborhood hotspot features house made pastas, oven-baked pizzas and more Italian farm-to-table cuisine. Wash it down with a sophisticated cocktail or a selection from the on-site retail wine shop. 505 Laurel St., Bankers Hill, \$\$\$

CHIANTI - Authentic Italian cuisine. Seafood, steaks, pasta, full bar. Fresh flowers & candlelight. Patio seating. Perfect for a family treat, romantic dinner or corporate dining. 644 5th Ave, Gaslamp, \$\$

BOTTEGA AMERICANO - Chef David Warner and team whip up progressive Italian cuisine at this Euro-style "foodery," which features several interactive food bars. On the menu: stone-fired pizzas, handmade pasta and authentic desserts. 1195 Island Ave., East Village, \$\$\$

SUSHI

NOBU - After conquering L.A., New York, Miami, London and Vegas, celeb Chef Nobu Matsuhisa brings his brand to the Hard Rock Hotel. 207 Fifth Ave., Gaslamp, \$\$\$

TAKA - Hip, upscale Gaslamp sushi bar with inventive Asian fusion dishes like miso black cod and oysters dynamite on and off the menu. 555 Fifth Ave., Gaslamp, \$\$

RA Sushi - A hip sushi bar that also features a creative menu of Japanese fusion. 474 Broadway Ave, Gaslamp, \$\$

UNDERBELLY - Build your own elevated noodle creation from toppings like bacon-wrapped mushrooms and kimchi octopus at this hip, casual ramen bar. 750 Fir St., Little Italy, \$

SEAFOOD

THE OCEANAIRE SEAFOOD ROOM - The kitchen creates a new menu of market-fresh seafood dishes daily. Retro ocean liner design features an oyster bar. 400 J St., Gaslamp \$\$\$

OSETRA THE FISHHOUSE - Caviar, vodka and oysters, as well as a three-story wine tower at this progressive eatery. Prime-aged meats are also on the menu. 904 Fifth Ave., Gaslamp, \$\$\$

BLUE POINT COASTAL CUISINE - Terrific California-style seafood. Daily specials, fresh oysters (including namesake Blue Points), hip martini bar and decadent desserts. 565 Fifth Ave., Gaslamp, \$\$

THE FISH MARKET/TOP OF THE MARKET - Casual dining includes seafood and sushi, plus oyster bar and bay view. Upstairs: Top of the Market features fine seafood and an expanded wine list. 750 N. Harbor Drive, Embarcadero, \$\$

ISLAND PRIME - Seafood, steak and cocktails complemented by one of the city's best views. Adjacent C Level Lounge on the spacious deck is popular with the after-work crowd. 880 Harbor Island Drive, Harbor Island, \$\$\$

EDDIE V'S PRIME SEAFOOD - Find seafood classics like shrimp cocktail, ahi tartar and lobster bisque, plus 28-day aged Prime center-cut steaks. 789 W Harbor Dr, Seaport Village, \$\$\$

SALLY'S - Marina views and a seafood-heavy menu, with chili-cumin diver scallops and lobster pot pie. Manchester Grand Hyatt, 1 Market Place, Embarcadero, \$\$\$

1500 OCEAN - House made pastas and adventurous starters with bold, inventive flavors define this special-occasion spot on Coronado, complete with intimate ocean-view terrace with beach cabanas and a wine cellar. (Tu-Sa). Hotel del Coronado, 1500 Orange Ave., Coronado, \$\$\$

STEAK HOUSE

GREYSTONE, THE STEAK HOUSE - Prime steaks, seafood and pastas in a great downtown location. Inside dining is eclectic and elegant. D (nightly), 340 Fifth Ave., Gaslamp, \$\$\$

FLEMING'S PRIME STEAK HOUSE & WINE BAR - Upscale steakhouse with Prime steaks, seafood and an excellent wine list (100+ choices by the glass). \$\$\$

DONOVAN'S STEAK & CHOP HOUSE - Find huge portions of Prime steaks, chops and seafood. D (nightly) 570 K St., Gaslamp \$\$\$

COWBOY STAR - With barstools upholstered in cowhide, this downtown steakhouse and adjacent butcher shop brings a touch of Old West style to the neighborhood. Great cocktails. 640 10th Ave., East Village, \$\$\$

GASLAMP STRIP CLUB - Vintage Vargas Girl prints adorn this grill-it-yourself steakhouse and martini bar with self-serve wine cellar. 340 Fifth Ave., Gaslamp, \$\$

LOU & MICKEY'S - Chop house with a mid-century feel features Prime steaks, chops and seafood, plus martinis shaken tableside and 350+-item wine list. 224 Fifth Ave., Gaslamp, \$\$\$

MORTON'S, THE STEAKHOUSE - USDA Prime-aged beef, seafood, fine wine, chilled cocktails, decadent desserts, crisp white linens and great service. 285 J St., downtown, \$\$\$

RUTH'S CHRIS STEAKHOUSE - Steakhouse chain renowned for "like buttah" steaks. D(nightly). 1355 N. Harbor Drive, Embarcadero, \$\$\$

TRACTOR ROOM – American, This dimly lit spot is decked out in hunting lodge chic, with a game-heavy menu that includes crispy elk ravioli and venison meatloaf, plus killer craft cocktails. D (nightly), Br (Sa-Su). 3687 Fifth Ave., Hillcrest, \$\$

AMERICAN

VELA - Vela features the freshest meats, daily caught fish, and locally grown and sustainable market produce. With an emphasis on global coastal cuisine and wines that span all oceans. Hilton Bayfront Hotel, \$\$

JSIX - Hip restaurant in Hotel Solamar features seasonal foods inspired by the coastline and area farms, plus wines from Washington to Baja. Roof top bar. 616 J St., Gaslamp \$\$\$

SALTBOX - Hip gastrolounge features entrees made from farm-fresh ingredients and retro-inspired craft cocktails. 1047 Fifth Ave., Gaslamp, \$\$

LION'S SHARE - Wedged between three higher-profile neighborhoods, this new hotspot is a hidden gem you'll want to keep all to yourself. Exposed brick and old-timey Edison bulbs lend the place a metropolitan feel, while Chef Lhasa Landry's adventurous menu includes wild boar ribs, stuffed quail and antelope sliders. Don't miss the cocktails, an updated spin on classic recipes. D (nightly). 629 Kettner Blvd., downtown, \$\$

CRAFT + COMMERCE - Gastropub-inspired food like roasted bone marrow, fried pickles and bacon cracker jacks, plus handcrafted cocktails, local beers and a lively, social bar atmosphere. 675 W. Beech St., Little Italy, 619.269.2202 \$\$

PREPKITCHEN LITTLE ITALY - Its stylish second-story locale makes for a fabulous alternative to the many Italian eateries in the area. Daily specials include always-changing items such as the farmers market flatbread and local halibut as the fresh catch. Menu changes seasonally. 1660 India St., Little Italy, \$\$\$

THE PRADO - The Prado's dramatic garden patio is the perfect setting for a drink or a bite after a long day of sightseeing in Balboa Park. The eclectic American menu is spiked with Latin/Italian flair. L (daily), D (Tu-Su). 1549 El Prado, House of Hospitality, Balboa Park, \$\$

GLASS DOOR - With views spanning across Little Italy and the bay from its fourth-floor indoor/outdoor space, Glass Door focuses on a seafood-based international menu, drawing influence from the major culinary capitals of the world. Try the gnocchi with smoked pork and the lobster risotto. 1835 Columbia St., Little Italy, \$\$

EXTRAORDINARY DESSERTS - Desserts Topped with edible flowers and gold flakes, Karen Krasne's stunning tarts, cakes and other treats are truly extraordinary. A must-try. Open daily. 1430 Union St., Little Italy & 2929 Fifth Ave., Hillcrest, \$\$

STARLITE - Dazzling design complements fresh, sustainably farmed food and boutique cocktails at this ultra-hip restaurant/bar. Open for dinner late night; don't miss the burger on brioche washed down with the signature Starlite Mule. D (nightly), Br (Su). 3175 India St., Midtown/Little Italy, \$\$\$

LEROY'S KITCHEN & LOUNGE - Recognized for its farm-to-table fare, Leroy's is a comfortably hip locals hangout. Executive Chef JC Colon offers a variety of unique seafood, meat and pasta dishes. Favorites include roasted rainbow trout and duck pot pie. 1015 Orange Ave., Coronado \$\$

GRANT GRILL - Chef Mark Kropczynski creates dishes with ingredients native to the region jumbo diver scallops are a signature dish while Jeff Josenhans crafts mixology magic behind the bar, all inside the historic U.S. Grant Hotel. 326 Broadway, downtown, \$\$

BERTRAND AT MISTER A'S - Incredible 12th-floor views complemented by fresh, seasonal ingredients. Appetizers range from mac n' cheese to pan seared scallops, augmented by an outstanding wine list. 2550 Fifth Ave., Bankers Hill, \$\$\$

FLORENT RESTAURANT & LOUNGE - Housed in the original "Old City Hall" building, Florent features upscale, yet playful, American comfort food created by Top Chef alum Rich Sweeney. Start with the crispy Brussels sprouts and beef sliders; for entrees try the stuffed Jidori chicken and grilled New York strip steak. Plus, updated classic cocktails and plenty of craft brews. 672 Fifth Ave., Gaslamp, \$\$

UNION KITCHEN & TAP - Beer, craft cocktails, boutique wines and tavern-style grub are all on the menu. Choose from 20 rotating taps of mostly local brews to wash down a bison burger or sweet potato poutine. 333 Fifth Ave, Gaslamp, \$\$

JUNIPER & IVY - Top Chef star Richard Blais oversees the modernist Cali-American menu loaded with artisanal dishes-from raw seafood, pastas and small plates, to mains such as prime strip loin and local chicken served with English pea gnocchi-and a fun and ambitious cocktail menu. 2228 Kettner Blvd., Little Italy, \$\$\$

INTERNATIONAL

REI DO GADO - This Brazilian-style steakhouse serves succulent beef and pork cooked over a mesquite fire, brought tableside on skewers. 939 Fourth Ave., Gaslamp, \$\$

CAFE SEVILLA - Rustic Spanish-themed dining room offers tasty tapas and pitchers of fragrant sangria. Live flamenco dancers F-Sa. 555 Fourth Ave., Gaslamp Quarter, \$\$

LOTUS THAI - Elegant bamboo decor and modern Thai cuisine with specialties including Choo Chee pork chops and roasted half-duck curry. L, D (daily). 3761 Sixth Ave., Hillcrest & 906 Market St., downtown, \$\$

CAFE CHLOE - This locals' favorite offers an afternoon "urban tea" (booking required) and bistro cuisine, such as smoked trout salad, cheese plates and moules frites in a casually elegant downtown setting, complete with small sidewalk patio. 721 Ninth Ave., East Village, \$\$

URBAN INDIA - Part Indian buffet, part sports bar, Urban India comes equipped with a full-service bar, flat screen TVs and an extensive menu of Punjabi fare. Northern Indian favorites include goat curry and kadi pakoda, or deep-fried veggie dumplings in yogurt curry, among many vegetarian and vegan options. 1041 Fourth Ave., Gaslamp Quarter, \$\$

FOGO de CHAO® - An authentic Brazilian steakhouse. In 1979, Fogo® began sharing the gaucho way of preparing meat in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Today, our gaucho chefs still expertly grill each of our 16 cuts of meat and offer you continuous tableside service. 668 Sixth Ave, Gaslamp, \$\$

BALI HAI - Tiki oasis has a Polynesian menu, featuring Korean barbecued ribs and wok-fried whole striped bass, plus fabulous bay views and stiff Mai Tais. Check out the renovated decor and outdoor dining patio. L (M-Sa), D (nightly), Br (Su). 2230 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island, \$\$\$

MEXICAN

LA FIESTA - Mexican- Offers the best showcase of Mexican cuisine in San Diego. The menu offers a number of family friendly items and Sunday brunch. 628 Fifth Ave, Gaslamp \$\$

CANDELAS ON THE BAY - Mexican- The commitment to a Mexico City type of flavor along with our four star service and ultra romantic ambiance. 1201 First St, Coronado \$\$\$

BLIND BURRO - Sustainable, Mexican street food with a modern edge, served in an urban-industrial cantina with rustic touches. 639 J St, Gaslamp. \$\$

DON CHIDO – Buzzy choice for Mexican cuisine boasts a Ceviche bar & Tortilleria plus mezcal & tequila offerings. \$\$

PUESTO –Fresh innovative Mexican dining. Voted best Mexican street food in San Diego.